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Extended Abstract

Strategic Alignment of Sustainability through Projects

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Abstract

Nowadays many organizations have turned their attention from focusing on financial goals to sustainability goals. As they found that sustainability is new way of revenue driver and another way for maintaining competitive advantages. This has encouraged many organizations to adopt and integrate sustainability into their products and processes. Implementation of sustainability across organization needs to be carefully managed in order to generate maximum revenue and maintain competitive advantages. To do so, many organizations have moved up the concept of sustainability into their corporate agenda and integrate it into their strategies. Strategy is about goals and plans. Every organization has its own strategy which guide them to achieve their objectives and goals which might be focusing on delivering best service or product or be most popular among others and so on. Hence, in order to achieve sustainable service or product, organizations should have strategy which focuses on sustainability. In general, there are two types of strategies one called formulation and the other one called implementation. In addition there should be a link between formulation and implementation and this link called “alignment”. The concept of alignment is critical as it helps to implement the strategic objectives in a right way.

The purpose of this study is to explore the alignment process between sustainability strategy and organizational project management/ project management office/ projects in achieving the right sustainable projects and measure the performance of these projects in delivering the sustainable products or services. In addition, to explore the integration of sustainability into organizational strategy and cascade it to lower levels. The study will be investigating on five different levels. The first level is about strategic orientation. In this level the researcher will investigate what type of strategies that construction organizations have used to create their sustainability strategy, defender, analyser or prospector strategies. In level two the researcher will investigate what are the main organizational outcomes measures that they have considered in implementation of sustainability in their construction projects. In third level the researcher will investigate to what level construction organizations have cascaded their strategy. In fourth and fifth levels the researcher will investigate how the alignment process is being implemented between organizational strategy and organizational project management/ project management office/ projects and other functional department to achieve the right sustainable project.

The study started with extensive literature review on concept of sustainability and its main pillars. Then followed with concept of strategy and what are types of strategies that construction organizations used in terms of market orientation and organizational levels. After that followed with concept of alignment between organizational strategy and project management to achieve the right sustainable project. As this study will be conducting in field of projects, an extensive literature review on project management has been also conducted to show how previously construction organizations have effectively aligned their organizational strategy to implement sustainable project through project management office or organizational project management.

After conducting extensive review, a conceptual framework comes next which a framework has been developed by the researcher on how to integrate sustainability into organizational strategy and align the sustainability strategy to implement the right project with sustainable outcomes through project management or organizational project management. Based on framework, number of hypotheses will be developed and tested them in methodology chapter in order to validate this framework internationally in field of construction.

A qualitative inductive approach will be used for this study case study approach is used to do data analysis and discussion. A detailed ethical consideration has been mentioned such as trust, honest, don't do any knowledge fabrication and keep high level of confidentiality. As we know, every research will have number of limitations which researchers have developed them to be conduct as future research. So the limitation in this study is that due to time constraint, the researcher decided only to examine five construction organizations that have considered the concept of sustainability in their strategic objectives and 35 participants from three levels (corporate, business and functional) in each organization. Interview is selected to be used for this study and it is considered as robust instrument to conduct qualitative research. An interview structure was prepared in a way where the interview questions focus on the research goals and objectives and to meet the validity and reliability. An electronic letter request will be sent to each General Manager or CEO of concern organization to conduct the current research. The data analysis technique that will be used for this study is adopted from Gibbs (2002). As this study is going to used Grounded theory approach, the Gibbs (2002) data analysis is one of appropriate techniques of data collection for grounded theory. Once the data analysis has been conducted, a detailed discussion has been conducted to validate what has been mentioned by other researchers in their previous studies and to

validate the proposed framework, which has been developed by the researcher, to be used internationally in field of construction.

Risk analyses in general is important to manage uncertainties that might occurred in any research. So these risks should be efficiently managed and a list of questions have been developed in the planning stage of this research. A complete timelines for both research proposal and thesis activities has been developed with planned start and finish dates. In addition, a detailed work breakdown structure has been developed to show a subdivision of effort required to achieve an each activity.

Finally, the thesis will end with conclusion of what has been discussion from introduction, literature review, conceptual framework, methodology, data analysis and discussion. After that a set of recommendation will be proposed by the researcher to be taken into consideration in order to enhance the Strategic Alignment of Sustainability through Projects.